

22) Interview with Mr. Okada Takashi (岡田尚), Assistant to Army Commander Matsui

From the Meiji through the Showa era, a number of people, such as Toyama Mitsuru (頭山満) and Kayano Nagatomo (萱野長知), assisted in the Chinese Revolution and Mr. Okada Takashi's father, Mr. Okada Aritami (岡田有民) was one of them. Mr. Okada Aritami supported the Xishan clique of the Nationalist Party and when the Fujian People's Government was established, Mr. Okada, together with General Matsui Iwane, then-Commander of the Taiwan Army of Japan, tried to mediate between the Fujian People's Government and the Nationalist Party Government. Therefore, Mr. Okada Aritami was very close to General Matsui, and consequently, Mr. Okada Takashi, Aritami's son, knew of General Matsui during his childhood.

In August 1937, General Matsui was appointed Commander of the Shanghai Expeditionary Army. Invited to General Matsui's house, Mr. Okada Takashi was ordered to accompany the General as non-regular-staff of Army Headquarters, and to serve under his command. Mr. Okada could speak the Shanghai dialect and was acquainted with Chinese VIPs, so the General Matsui needed him to communicate with these VIPs in order to hasten a peace agreement with China.

Thus, Mr. Okada worked in Shanghai, Nanjing, and Hong Kong, under General Matsui's special orders of, until the end of February 1938, when General Matsui returned to Japan in triumph.

Due to their close ties, General Matsui shared with Mr. Okada his feelings that could not be expressed in public. Since General Matsui entry into Nanjing, Mr. Okada was with him the whole time. Therefore, through Mr. Okada, we can see General Matsui's thinking, what did he thought about the Nanjing Attack and what he saw in Nanjing. Considering these things, I asked Mr. Okada what he himself saw in Nanjing, as well as what General Matsui was thinking and what he saw in Nanjing.

As the capture of Nanjing became merely a matter of time, Mr. Okada followed General Matsui to Suzhou, where Mr. Okada translated the advisement for surrender into Chinese, which was to be scattered within Nanjing Castle. The handbills calling for surrender were scattered within the Castle on the 9th, setting the deadline for a reply for the 10th. However, the Chinese Army refused to surrender and the Japanese Army began an all-out attack.

After the capture of Nanjing, General Matsui entered Nanjing. While in Nanjing, Mr. Okada followed General Matsui, and on December 22, General Matsui and Mr. Okada returned to Shanghai by the torpedo boat *Ootori*. Thereafter, Mr. Okada engaged in political maneuverings within the International Settlement. At the end of February, General Matsui returned to Japan in triumph but Mr. Okada remained in Shanghai, and when the Reformed Government of the Republic of China was established, Major General Harada Kumakichi (原田熊吉) became the Supreme Adviser of the Reformed Government and Mr. Okada served as Secretary-General of the Advisers Department.

After the War, Mr. Okada managed his medical books publishing company for a long period of time. When I met him, he was 78 years old, yet he was still working at his company twice a week.

The interview started with events on December 8, 1937 when Army Headquarters was located in Suzhou.

– Who did make the advisement of surrender?

General Matsui. In the battle of Shanghai and later battles, incredibly large numbers of Japanese soldiers were killed and all soldiers were really riled up with anger, not just the lower ranks but Regiment Commanders were as well. There was insufficient equipment, insufficient numbers of soldiers, so the damage we took was inevitable. Under such circumstances, General Matsui wanted a peaceful entry into Nanjing, the capital of China, so he decided to demand that they surrender.

– Were the Japanese soldiers in a rage?

Yes. They didn't expect enemy resistance to be so strong—more than they imagined. In addition, their comrades, brothers-in-arms, were killed. General Matsui knew of his soldiers' feelings and worried about it; therefore, the General advised the Chinese to surrender.

– The designated deadline was noon on December 10, wasn't it?

Yes. The four of us, Chief of Staff Major General Tsukada Osamu (塚田攻), Staff Officer Lieutenant Colonel Kimihira Masatake (公平匡武), Staff Officer Major Nakayama Neito (中山寧人), and I, went to the designated spot near Zhongshan Gate. At the time, a cease-fire was issued but in fact fighting continued at Mt. Zijin. Under such a condition, we went to the Zhongshan Gate. No military messenger appeared, so we hurried back to Suzhou in order to decide what to do after that. Then, our all-out attack started. Hearing that the enemy refused our advice to surrender, General Matsui was very disappointed.

– How long did you stay in Suzhou?

I stayed Suzhou for 2 days and as Nanjing was almost captured, Lieutenant Colonel Murakami Soji (村上宗治) of the Management Division and I went to Tang Shuizhen (湯水鎮). On the way to Tang Shuizhen, I saw Japanese soldiers stabbing prisoners to death on the bank of a creek.

– What date was it?

I think it was the 12th, around 1 p.m. One thousand to 2,000 Chinese soldiers were made to sit in the empty area, female soldiers were among them. They lined several prisoners on the bank and stabbed them to death. Lieutenant Colonel Murakami got out the car and told the officer in command, maybe it was a first lieutenant or second lieutenant, that that was cruel. The commanding officer said that they were in the middle of battle, that they had no other choice. We had nothing further to say.

The commanding officer told Lieutenant Colonel Murakami that they could not waste a single bullet, and that they didn't ask headquarters for permission. They couldn't think but to kill the Chinese soldiers and go on to Nanjing. As I mentioned earlier, they were so enraged that they did not know what to do with the prisoners.

– Did they kill them all?

I don't know. We left there quickly.

– When did you enter Nanjing?

My memory is not clear, it might have been the 13th or 14th, maybe 13th. Lieutenant Colonel Murakami and I stayed in Tang Shuizhen overnight, then went to Nanjing by car. We had to prepare for lodging of the Army Headquarters and the entrance ceremony.

– At that moment, was holding of the entrance ceremony decided?

Yes. The 17th was not fixed but holding of the ceremony itself was decided. So I entered Nanjing and chose the Nationalist Government's building as the place for ceremony preparation. For the lodging, I chose the Capital Hotel for Army Headquarters and prepared a room and so on for General Matsui.

– What was the situation inside Nanjing?

An amazing number of military uniforms, gaiters, caps and so on were scattered around the town. That was most impressive. The Chinese soldiers abandoned their uniforms and slipped themselves in with the civilians. From the Chinese soldiers' point of view, this was reasonable because if they wore their uniform, then they would be killed by Japanese soldiers. On the ramparts around Zhongshan Gate hung many gaiters (puttees)--the Chinese soldiers used their gaiters to climb the wall and run away.

Under the instruction of Captain Onishi Hajime, a bearded man called Son (孫) organized an autonomous safety association to dispose of the abandoned uniforms and gaiters.

The shops in the Castle were empty—they were ransacked either by Chinese soldiers during their escape or by Japanese soldiers after they entered; anyway there were traces of plundering. I assume the Japanese soldiers stole foods, but the other things were stolen mostly by Chinese soldiers.

In March 1938, when the Reformed Government was established, I visited Nanjing again, and I found a flea market full of luxurious carpets and antiques. I believe that they were goods that were previously plundered. At the flea market, I bought a carpet for my house.

– It is said that immediately after the capture, Japanese soldiers had massacred civilians. Did you see a massacre?

No. There were no corpses in the Castle. Therefore, I believe that there was no massacre of the general population. I am not saying that nothing happened. There were so many soldiers that a couple of rapes or robberies must have occurred. But the incidence of such cases was very small.

At the time, Japanese diplomats were already in Nanjing. If a rape or something happened, the victim reported it to the Consulate. The Consulate had an idea of the numbers, which were very limited. A massacre could not have happen. In those days, Mr. Fukuda Tokuyasu (福田篤泰), Consular Attaché (later Director General of the Japan Defense Agency), was in charge of those kind of matters.

In addition, it is said that fires broke out in Nanjing but I don't remember any. When I visited Nanjing in March 1938, I found all of large buildings standing there, and other buildings, which we used for lodging directors and officers of the Reformed Government. I was also given a house. Therefore, it was not true that fires burned down a large number of buildings.

– You didn't see a massacre. But did you hear about one?

I heard about the prisoners. At Xiaguan, Japanese soldiers tried to make the prisoners cross the River – they just wanted to drive off the prisoners, far away from Nanjing, by any means. During the crossing, a disturbance occurred and they shot the prisoners--that's what I heard.

– It is said a great massacre took place.

About 140,000 to 150,000 civilians stayed within the Safety Zone safely but some of the prisoners or stragglers must have been killed, like those I saw in Tang Shuizhen. Japanese soldiers were totally exhausted and worn out—I could say they had no energy left to care for prisoners.

Also, Chinese soldiers who slipped into the Refugee Safety Zone were caught. Investigation was done by the military police and they said they could identify a Chinese soldier by checking for traces of wearing a cap. Those Chinese soldiers were killed but I doubt that this should be called a “massacre”. You can say anything now in peaceful

surroundings, but you cannot say that given the circumstances of those days.

One thing I wonder about is why the Chinese soldiers did not accept our call for surrender. They were obviously already defeated. Nothing else to do but surrender. It was not the surrender of the entire nation—it was the surrender of Nanjing only. During the Russo-Japanese War, General Anatoly Stessel surrendered to General Nogi when Port Arthur fell. Same as that. After the capture of Port Arthur, the Russo-Japanese War continued. In the case of Nanjing, they could have surrendered, just Nanjing.

As a matter of fact, I sympathize with China. I did not agree with the establishment of Manchuria. During the China Incident, Japan went overboard. But as far as the refusal to surrender in Nanjing is concerned, I think China was wrong. And eventually the highest commander himself, T'ang Sheng-chih (唐生智), escaped. This was wrong of China and same thing happened in the Boxer Rebellion, in which, in the end, the highest commander of Qing dynasty fled. It is the same for a company—if the person responsible for the company fled, then the company would fall into chaos and their employees would loot and run off.

If they had surrendered the matter of prisoners would never have arose. If you cite International Law, I think the route that China had taken was the problem.

– Did you see Xiaguan?

I went to Xiaguan, together with General Matsui. Xiaguan was a place where Nanjing Station was situated. Many bodies were left. General Matsui and I saw this.

– How many bodies?

I can't say exact number, but several hundreds. I assume some of them had been cleared away before General Matsui arrived.

– Major Sumi Yoshiharu (角良晴), who was the General's adjutant stated that he saw hundreds of thousands of bodies.

Concerning the bodies in Xiaguan, Mr. Sumi, General Matsui and I saw the same

bodies, but it couldn't have been hundreds of thousands. I moved to Tokyo in the Taisho era in order to enter junior high school and I experienced the Great Kanto Earthquake¹. After the Earthquake, I saw 1,000 – 2,000 bodies with my own eyes, but there were not so many bodies at Xiaguan. Mr. Sumi came from Kagoshima, he was very quiet man—the impression of bodies at Xiaguan was exceptionally strong to him. He kept this impression and expressed it as “hundreds of thousands”. For a person who saw bodies for the first time, it likely looked greater than it actually was.

At the Tokyo Trial (IMTFE), it was said that 100,000 to 200,000 Chinese were massacred. These are inconceivable numbers. Of course, in the suburbs there were hundreds and thousands of bodies. During fighting in the suburbs, a considerable number of Japanese soldiers were also killed. But in town, I didn't see bodies. The things that I saw and heard and the incident which was called the Nanjing-incident after the War are not consistent.

If you want to know about the Chinese soldiers who fled to the Yangtze River, I think the people in the Navy know better about this than we do.

– It is said that Staff Officer Cho issued the “massacre order”.

Yes, I heard the rumor that Mr. Cho said, “Kill the prisoners,” “We are in war, kill them,” or something like that.

– Did he issue such order?

No, no. At Headquarters the issue of prisoners was discussed and Mr. Cho uttered such wild words. Naturally, these were not orders. He was just a staff officer, so he had no power to issue an order. People around him didn't take it seriously. Mr. Cho had no idea what to do—he just used violent words. Later, people exaggerated his remarks.

– Did anybody reprimand Lieutenant Colonel Cho? Deputy Chief Muto Akira, for example?

¹ The Great Kanto Earthquake, September 1, 1923, claimed around 105,000 victims.

We knew Mr. Cho often used empty words. I don't think Mr. Muto said about that.

– What did General Matsui think of Lieutenant Colonel Cho?

I think General Matsui didn't appreciate him. General Matsui's main concern was what to do after we won the war, that he wanted to establish a stable Chinese government and to bring stability to the Chinese peoples' lives. He was planning to use Colonel Wachi Takaji (和知鷹二) for the planning. Anyway, Mr. Cho had been appointed as Information Staff Officer so General Matsui used him partly for planning.

– Do you think General Matsui knew about Lieutenant Colonel Cho's wild words?

I don't know. I have never heard anything about this from General Matsui. I don't know whether General Matsui knew of the rumor or not, but I remember he ordered someone to summon Cho to him.

– Did Mr. Matsui know of the rumor of the shooting the prisoners at Xiaguan?

I don't know. He might have known about this. Even if he knew, he would have thought that it was a battlefield-related matter. Otherwise, he would have said something about it. General Matsui was not easy-going person, never blindly signed anything. You could see his personality during the Aizawa Incident². He took responsibility and withdrew from his post. As shown in this episode, he was a man who took responsibility seriously, therefore if he didn't like something he would make his displeasure known.

– Who was the General's source for news? Chief of Staff Tsukada?

General Matsui got information not only from him but also from several other staff officers. I saw him speaking often with Mr. Kimihira, and Mr. Nakayama. And in Nanjing, Mr. Muto always followed General Matsui, so he got information from Mr. Muto, too.

² On August 1935, Major General Nagata Tetsuzan (永田鉄山), Army Military Affairs Bureau Chief, was attacked in his office and killed by Lieutenant Colonel Aizawa.

Other news sources were the Shanghai Expeditionary Army and the 10th Army. The Central China Area Army had only an administration department and staff officers, and they didn't have a legal department. So matters on prisoners or others were handled by the Shanghai Expeditionary Army and the 10th Army, from which General Matsui might have heard something about prisoners.

– Who were serving closely to General Matsui?

Senior adjutant Lieutenant Colonel Murakami, and Mr. Sumi, who was an executive adjutant. Mr. Saito Yoshie (齊藤良衛), an expert in International Law, gave advice about international matters. In addition, the interpreter Fujiki (藤木), who was a Chinese language teacher, and Dr. Sasakawa (笹川), Chief of Army Surgeons, the Paymaster Lieutenant Kuruma (車), Pay Officer, etc.

– According to the book *Age of Shanghai*, written by Mr. Matsumoto Shigeharu, after the memorial service on the 18th, General Matsui chastised all commanders, including General Prince Asaka [Asakanomiya]. What did he say?

I think General Matsui called the commanders' attention to general matters. He started to speak “On procedures to maintain the order of battle,” and he mentioned disciplinary problems. The memorial service was not the only time—General Matsui always warned discipline.

– Did he know there were disciplinary problems?

He heard of a couple of cases—as I mentioned earlier, he was informed by staff officers. However, in those days nobody heard about a massacre. General Matsui didn't hear of one either. He simply was upset about general discipline.

At first glance, General Matsui looks like an easy-going person but he was very strict and had a strong personality. He spoke his mind and would not act disobediently. Even Mr. Cho became helpless in front of him.

General Matsui graduated from the Army Academy with General Araki Sadao, and General Matsui acted as go-between at Mr. Araki's daughter's wedding. General Matsui

complained that Mr. Araki was easily flattered by young people. Just like that, General Matsui openly said what was on his mind, even of small matters.

– It seemed that General Matsui was not satisfied with Divisional Commander Lieutenant General Nakajima Kesago' command. Did you see something related with that in Nanjing?

In Nanjing, I saw nothing between the two. But after returned to Shanghai, General Matsui complained that, “Division Commander Nakajima is not good, he is reckless, gives no consideration to matters, and, as superior, too imprudent in controlling others.”

– Muto Akira (武藤章), Deputy Chief of Staff of the Central China Area Army, wrote his memoir, *From the Philippines to Sugamo (prison)*:

“During operations, General Matsui tried to respect Chinese standing to the extent that it was deemed far from realistic. The General's soft attitude made some officers frustrated and an Army commander, someone, and some Division commanders, who considered strategy should be the priority, protested to the General. Lodging in the next room, at Nanjing, I heard them quarreling furiously.”

I assume that this “Army Commander” was Lieutenant General Yanagawa Heisuke (柳川平助) and the Division Commander was Lieutenant General Nakajima. Were you there in the argument?

No, I was not. If Mr. Muto wrote this, I think it is true. It was very likely that General Matsui argued with Mr. Yanagawa. In Shanghai, he did not speak well of Mr. Yanagawa.

– Did General Matsui disagree with Commander Yanagawa about the *Ladybird* Incident³?

³ A British gunboat, *Ladybird*, on the Yangtze River was accidentally fired upon by a Japanese Army Artillery unit near Nanjing early December 12, 1937. The Japanese government made an official apology to UK.

General Matsui and Mr. Yanagawa did not get along from the beginning. General Matsui was in the same Academy class as General Mazaki Jinzaburo (真崎甚三郎)⁴ and those two did not get along. Mr. Yanagawa belonged to Mr. Mazaki's group.

– According to a memoir written by Lieutenant General Kawabe Torashiro (辺虎四郎), then Chief of Operations, General Matsui had read an admonition written by the General Chief of Staff immediately after the Capture of Nanjing, and cried, “I am terribly sorry.” Some people said this was the proof of a “Nanjing Massacre”. Did you know about that?

No. I never heard that General Matsui cried. It was likely that the admonition might have been issued from the Central Authorities if it was related with general discipline. But if it was related with a massacre that happened in Nanjing, an admonition from Central Authorities was quite unlikely.

Shanghai was an international city so we were constantly warned about discipline, but we heard nothing about a massacre--it was not possible that Central Authorities got information before we did and warned us. Concerning third countries' interests, General Matsui repeatedly warned the soldiers to protect the interests of uninvolved parties.

– According to the note “Efforts for Peace” written by Prime Minister Konoe after the War; when General Matsui was about to leave Tokyo Station he said to the Prime Minister that he would go to Nanjing. Was he already intending to go as far as Nanjing?

I doubt that story. In a war we don't know how far we go or where to stop. The war might have ended in Shanghai. I think that he didn't think about going Nanjing at first. If he thought that he had to go Nanjing, it must be for the purpose of peace. General Matsui held Japan-China peace in high regard and had a close relationship with Chiang Kai-shek.

At the end of February 1938, the night before General Matsui was leaving for Shanghai for his triumphant return, General Matsui invited Ri Takuichi (李秩一), Mine Tokuhiko (峯徳宏), Major General Harada (原田), Colonel Usuda (臼田), and me, for dinner. At the dinner, he said “I will go back Japan tomorrow but I would like to come to China again as ambassador and discuss peace.” That was his cherished dream.

⁴ General Mazaki belonged to Imperial Way Faction.

When he left Tokyo, General Matsui required at least five Divisions. He knew that the Chinese Nationalist Party was more powerful than they used to be. He made his request to Minister of Army Sugiyama (the former General). He asked Prime Minister Konoe, too. Mr. Sugiyama, based on successful experiences in the Manchurian-Incident and the first Shanghai-Incident, said General Matsui's demand was too great. General Matsui complained that Mr. Sugiyama hardly knew anything about China.

– After the War, the Nanjing-Incident was raised by the Tokyo Trial (IMTFE).

I was totally astonished. As I was very close to General Matsui, I started helping his lawyers Mr. Ito Kiyoshi (伊藤青) and Mr. Ueshiro Takuzen (上城琢禅). I never expected the sentence of death by hanging at the Tokyo Trial (IMTFE). Every defendant was unable to predict what accusations and decisions would be made. After all, the charge against General Matsui was a single count, that is, the Nanjing Incident.

I knew a person called Mr. Yamada Junzaburo (山田純三郎) who helped in Sun Yat-sen's Chinese Revolution. More than anything, Junzaburo's brother, Mr. Yamada Yoshimasa (山田良政) was killed by the Qing, at the beginning of the Revolution. Because of such a background, Sun Yat-sen admired Mr. Yamada Junzaburo, and Chiang Kai-shek did as well. Chiang Kai-shek treated Mr. Yamada Junzaburo respectfully at his departure from China to Japan after the War.

Mr. Yamada Junzaburo knew General Matsui, so during the Tokyo Trial (IMTFE), I counted on Mr. Yamada's friendship with Chiang Kai-shek and asked him to plead to Chiang Kai-shek to help General Matsui. But the answer from Chiang Kai-shek was “NO”—General Matsui was the representative Japanese who had to take responsibility.

So General Matsui was responsible for everything, with or without a “Nanjing Massacre”. Nanjing was the capital and they tried to make Nanjing a symbol for everything and it happened when General Matsui was the supreme commander. He was sacrificed for the convenience what was then Chinese policy.

Anyway, Japan attacked China and lost, and there was some misconduct in the war. For misconducts, General Matsui had to take responsibility. He understood this very well.

Before the execution, General Matsui's wife, their foster daughter, and his (major general) brother Nanao's wife and I visited him at Sugamo Prison.

23) Interview with the Colonel Tanida Isamu (谷田勇) , Staff Officer of the 10th Army

Mr. Tanida Isamu graduated from the 27th Army Academy class with an excellent performance record. Also he graduated from Artillery and Engineering School with excellent performance, as well as the Army War College—which means, he was, no doubt, an elite of the 27th class.

However, he did not move to the sunny side of the Army. A reason for this was that he belonged to the Imperial Way Faction. Since the 1936 2.26 Incident⁵, people who were thought to belong to the Imperial Way Faction were expelled from the Army and young people who narrowly escaped banishment remained in the Army but had no chance to get important positions. Mr. Tanida was one of these.

However, it happened that Mr. Tanida's father, Lieutenant General Tanida Fumie (谷田文衛), and Tojo Hideki's father, Lieutenant General Tojo Hidenori (東条英教), had shared a similar background, of attending the Army War College, and Mr. Tanida was favored by General Tojo. This might be the reason that he was promoted to lieutenant general despite the fact he belonged to the Imperial Way Faction. He was the last lieutenant general of the Imperial Way Faction.

Mr. Tanida held his position as nonconformist after the War, and kept in contact with Major General Tanaka Ryukichi (田中隆吉), who was completely ignored by the entire Imperial Army after the War. At the death of Major General Tanaka, while almost no member of the Imperial Army attended his funeral, Mr. Tanida did. Also in 1957, he visited the People's Republic of China, together with Lieutenant General Endo Saburo (遠藤三郎), who also was treated coldly by the Imperial Army.

In October 1937, Mr. Tanida, then working as an instructor of tactics at the Army War

⁵ An attempted coup d'etat by a group of young Imperial Japanese Army soldiers occurring on February 26, 1936.

Collage, was assigned as staff officer of the 10th Army. At the time, Mr. Tanida was 43 years old and he received the radio notice of his promotion to colonel, onboard the warship *Isuzu*, which was on the way to Hangzhou Bay.

After participating in the Attack on Nanjing, Mr. Tanida moved to suppress Hangzhou. In February of the next year, 1938, after the 10th Army was disbanded, he remained in China as Staff Officer, Chief of Logistics, in the Central China Expeditionary Army and participated in the Battle of Xuzhou, then the Hankou Operation. After that, Mr. Tanida served as the Chief of Staff of the 38th Division, then the Chief of the Second Section of Technical Headquarters.

And in May 1943, due to being accused of joining the peace movement by the Imperial Way Faction, Mr. Tanida was demoted by the Commander of the Signal Corps of the 8th Area Army, and sent to Rabaul, where he remained for the duration of the War.

Mr. Tanida contributed articles to the monthly magazine *Kaiko* every now and then and completed a great work, *A Battle between Dragon and Tiger*, in 1984 as well. When a book written by former Major General Tanaka Ryukich, was re-published, Mr. Tanida contributed his article to the book as well. With Mr. Tanida being as energetic as he was, I asked him for an interview. He answered that he would wait for me at 10 a.m., July 17, 1985. He was 92 years old and, needless to say, he was the oldest of the Imperial Soldiers who participated in the Attack on Nanjing.

At the time of the Nanjing Attack, Colonel Tanida was the Chief of the Third Section, which was in charge of in the 10th Army. Practically, he was the responsible person in charge of logistics. Some have stated that disciplinary problems of the 10th Army was due to poor supply, so I was going to ask him about this. Furthermore, this section was in charge of prisoners as well, plus it was said that Mr. Tanida was friendly with Lieutenant General Yanagawa Heisuke, the Commander of the 10th Army. This was the best opportunity to ask Mr. Tanida all about that.

On the day of interview, I was led to a room and I waited for him. In the room were portraits of Mr. Tanida and his father, Lieutenant General Tanida Fumie (谷田文衛) and I felt a little bit intimidated. Soon, Mr. Tanida appeared. He looked dignified in his kimono—even in his 90s, he no trace of senility. I was full of questions, so after exchanging short greetings we began:

– It is said that the Commander Yanagawa, when landed at Hangzhou Bay, told soldiers that even mountains, rivers, plants and trees, all were enemies...

To my sudden question, Mr. Tanida looked surprised and put his hand on his face.

I had requested that Mr. Tanida allow me to interview him, and in my letter, I wrote that I wanted to hear about Nanjing in 1937. To my request he responded simply, “Please come.” He knew nothing about me, and didn't expect such questions, so his surprise was quite understandable. Mr. Tanida contemplated for a while, 10 seconds or so. Then, suddenly, he said, “Let's start with my story.” He said this without answering my first question. Then he took his book, *A Battle between Dragon and Tiger*, from his bookshelf and said “Let's start with this story in this book.”

Each of his stories were concise and to the point. And his memory was very clear. I visited him 10 a.m., and when he completed his first part it was around 11 a.m. He kept up his monologue for one hour without fatigue. Eventually the interview lasted for three hours, I felt a little tired, but Mr. Tanida did not show any sign of fatigue up to the end.

The first part of Mr. Tanida's story is outlined as follows:

Within the Central Authorities of the Imperial Army during the Showa era, two factions struggled against each other due to differences in belief and philosophy—they were the Control Faction and the Imperial Way Faction.

Originally the Japanese Imperial Army regarded the Soviet Union as the biggest threat, against which Japan could not fight alone, so they believed that Japan, Manchuria and China must combine forces. The Imperial Way Faction was idealist, which believed that they could subsume China if they contacted them in friendly manner based on the Imperial Philosophy. On the other hand, the Control Faction was theoretically rationalist and insisted that against current-day China, with anti-Japanese and Japanophobia feeling running high, talk wouldn't work, so teaching them a lesson first, then enter into an agreement. This was the main difference between the two Factions on the matter of foreign policy.

In the March 1932 Shanghai-Incident, the Japanese Imperial Army destroyed the Chinese Army around Shanghai and returned to Japan quickly before May, without leaving any

soldiers there. And during the “Within the Great Wall” Operation in April 1933, the Japanese Army advanced to Huairou (懷柔), which was situated within hailing distance of Beijing, but the Japanese Army concluded a cease-fire in Tanggu (塘沽) and withdrew to the Great Wall. These two operations were performed during the term of the Minister of Army Araki Sadao (荒木貞夫), which expressed the philosophy of the Imperial Way Faction, that is, they would not touch the mainland of China except Manchuria.

Mr. Tanida stated all this to me and then went back to my first question:

– It is said that the Commander Yanagawa, when landed at Hangzhou Bay, told soldiers that even mountains, rivers, plants and trees, all were enemies...

No. The top members of the Imperial Way Faction were the General Mazaki Jinzaburo and Lieutenant Generals Araki Sadao, Yanagawa Heisuke and Obata Toshishiro (小畑敏四郎). Lieutenant General Yanagawa, a member of the Imperial Way Faction, did not say things like “even mountains, rivers, plants and trees in China, all were enemies.” If such a statement was made somewhere, I can be sure that the article was written by a person belonged to the Control Faction or a person who favored the Control Faction.

Among the top members of the Imperial Way Faction, Mr. Yanagawa was most devoted to deities, and regarded the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki* as sacred texts. Wherever he went, he visited the local shrine first and prayed to the local deity.

Thus, my first question was answered. At times laughing out and at times thinking deeply, Mr. Tanida's facial expression was very rich. Being relaxed, I dared to ask all of my questions.

Mr. Tanida continued;

Mr. Yanagawa's idea was based on his firm faith—once the triangle zone of central China was suppressed, the Japanese Army should withdraw from China as they did in the first Shanghai Incident. Mr. Yanagawa did not hesitate to state this idea.

Mr. Yanagawa made great contribution to battles, nevertheless his picture was always prohibited by instruction of the Central Authorities. Even in a photo of the entrance

ceremony, General Yanagawa's face was defaced and displayed. Seeing the photo, members of the Imperial Way Factions were upset, saying it was dirty revenge.

– Who would have instructed defacing a picture? Army Minister General Sugiyama Gen? Or Vice Minister Lieutenant General Umedu Michirou (梅津美治郎)?

Persons of superior rank would never suggest such things.

– So a leader of the press group or someone in the Ministry of Army suggested this?

Yes, that is likely.

– According to a memoir written by Lieutenant General Kawabe Torashiro (河辺虎四郎), then Chief of the Operations Section of General Staff Headquarters, General Matsui and Lieutenant General Yanagawa did not get along.

As I mentioned earlier, one belonged to the Control Faction and the other belonged to the Imperial Way Faction, so naturally their relationship was not friendly. However, during operations they had to act as ordered by their superiors. I don't think anything happened in particular.

– According to the book, *Military Policeman for 31 Years*, written by Mr. Katsushichi Uesuna, who was the Chief of Military Police of the 10th Army: the work of unloading food, etc. was very slow and without permission, the soldiers' requisition increased. The Chief of the Accounting Section couldn't take it, saying in a rage that he could not take responsibility for such terrible planning and he would quit. The Chief Staff Officer, Major General Tanabe Moritake, tried to soothe him to settle the matter.

Concerning the supply, the Third Section was in charge, and I was the head of the Section. If the Accounting Section had a complain, it should have been passed to me. At meetings between various levels, the senior staff of the Accounting Section should have talked to me if there was such problem. But I have no memory of that.

The chiefs of the sections of the 10th Army were mostly major generals on reserve duty

and the Chief of the Accounting Section was on reserve duty also. The party to whom the Chief of the Accounting Section himself must consult, was the Chief Staff Officer, me, so such a story could not have possibly happened without my knowledge.

– Was the plan for supplies a feasible one?

At the beginning, the Hangzhou Bay Landing Operation was successful, but after the landing, unloading was not completed for 4 to 5 days. Hangzhou Bay was shallow and the tidal range was significantly great, therefore gun carriages and other vehicles could not be landed. Even if unloading was successful, the road was so terrible that heavy vehicles could not proceed. How about the Shanghai route? We decided on a new plan around November 10: move the ships to Shanghai and unload equipment in Shanghai where the road was good and also we could use creeks to carry the equipment.

To change the place of landing and logistics station was an important matter but I decided this on my own because we couldn't contact Headquarters. So I dispatched Staff Officer Lieutenant Colonel Obata Nobuyoshi (小畑信良) to Shanghai. The Shanghai Expeditionary Army understood my plan at once and gave their port Nanshi in Shanghai to us, the 10th Army. I myself had landed Hangzhou already but returned to the ship and went to Shanghai. So we landed in Shanghai, followed after Headquarters and caught up Headquarters in Jiaying (嘉興) where we got necessary supplies.

After that we stayed in Huzhou (湖州) and waited for the order to attack Nanjing. So we were able to get supplies as well as considerable provisions and food, plus ammunition. Therefore, except at the first stage of landing, we generally had no difficulty with regard to supply.

– According to the book, *Military Policeman for 31 years*, the 10th Army had disciplinary problem.

It is common in any military all over the world, including the Japanese military, that strong troops have a high standard of discipline, and weak troops tend to raise disciplinary problems. It is a matter of human psychology – the weak tend to take out his own frustration toward those who are weaker, the people.

In case of the Japanese Army, soldiers who came from Tohoku and Kyushu were strong and soldiers who came from Kyoto and Osaka were weak. The Tohoku soldiers were characterized by obedience and the Kyushu soldiers were characterized by being proud. The 10th Army mainly consisted of the 6th Division and the 18th Division, both of which came from Kyushu, and I didn't hear that they had disciplinary problems.

– Lieutenant General Endo Saburo, Chief Staff of the First Section of General Headquarters then said in his book that the 6th Division didn't get a citation of merit for their achievement in the Battle of North China, and added that Chief of Operations was Colonel Sato Kotoku (佐藤幸徳). Due to the above two reasons he writes as if they committed a massacre.

Lieutenant General Endo could not have known about the 10th Army first hand. Since Huzhou (湖州), the Headquarters of the 10th Army followed the route of the 6th Division and we found no trace of a massacre at all. We saw bodies but all of them were Chinese soldiers. Besides, Colonel Sato was already transferred out of the 6th Division by this time. Concerning the 6th Division, they didn't commit any massacres.

– According to a battle report written by troops in the 114th Division, it is said that they received Brigade's order to kill the prisoners.

I cannot believe that at all. I don't know Major General Akiyama Juuzaburo (秋山充三郎), the Brigade Commander, but I knew Lieutenant General Suematsu Shigeharu (末松茂治), Division Commander. He was called from reserve duty and had very gentle personality—it was not likely that he would issue such an order.

– The Third Section was in charge of prisoners. What thoughts did you have on the prisoners?

I thought we had to treat them in accordance with International Law, not be cruel, not show favor. As a matter of fact, during the Operation, we met no problems with prisoners, so I never dreamed that Nanjing would be raised as an issue after the War. There were prisoners in Nanjing but in the Wuhan Operation, the enemy scampered far, far away, hardly any remaining.

– What was the situation inside Nanjing?

Headquarters entered Nanjing Castle on the 14th shortly before noon, 11:30 a.m. We entered through China Gate, hardly any corpses around there. Around 3:00 p.m., as the Chief of Logistics, I needed to inspect the condition of occupied places and I looked around the Castle by car, with a squad of guard from Headquarters.

When I went Xiaguan, I saw a warship anchored in the Yangtze River and met the Captain of the warship. At wharf's shore, I saw a number of bodies. There were more than 1,000, maybe more accurately 2,000 to 3,000. More than half of the bodies wore military uniforms and there were ordinary people's bodies, too.

– Were they killed in battle?

I thought that they had fled from the Castle and the 16th Division cornered them and shot them. I suppose that this was the so-called Massacre of decades later.

In saying so, Mr. Tanida took out his photo albums. In those days, Mr. Tanida was crazy about photography and during military service he took many photos of battlefields and everyday activity. Therefore, he had many important photos, every photo was indicated with a date and the circumstances.

Among the photos on December 14, there were photos of the entrance and inspection of the Castle as talked about. There were photos of Xiaguan, too. In the photos you can see burning buildings off in the distance, and in the foreground were 20 to 30 bodies.

When we arrived Xiaguan, it was around 4:00 p.m., the buildings were still burning, and we saw those bodies, 2,000 or so.

In his albums I found photos of the Headquarters of the 10th Army, in Lishui on December 8. One was a picture of a strategy meeting between the Army and its subordinate divisions before the Nanjing Attack, in which you can see the General Yanagawa and the 6th Division Commander Tani Yasuo (谷寿夫).

During the meeting, the General Yanagawa repeatedly warned Lieutenant General Tani

about discipline. This shows Mr. Yanagawa's personality.

On the 16th, the Sanmei Company of the 47th Infantry Regiment from Oita, which arrived first at the rampart, reported details of their moment, in front of the Commander of the Army, then the Commander and others started to climb the rampart. Inside the Castle, we found several bodies of Chinese soldiers.

It was the 6th Division that occupied the rampart of Nanjing Castle first. Nevertheless the Wakisaka Regiment of the 9th Division, which attacked Guanghua Gate, got more publicity because the 9th Division had their own reporters. I knew Colonel Wakisaka Jirou very well--he was a senior adjutant while I was working as a strategy instructor at the Army War College.

After the entrance ceremony on the 17th, I left Nanjing on the 19th in order to suppress Hangzhou, so I don't know anything after the 19th, but I do know of the situation in Nanjing until the 19th. The number of bodies was several thousand to 10,000, including in the area surrounding Nanjing, and no trace was found of a "massacre". Therefore, I am sure that after the War, at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, that 200,000 or 300,000, which was pushed by the Chinese side, must be intentional exaggerations.

– You wrote an article in the magazine *Kaiko* that the number of soldiers who were allowed to enter the Nanjing Castle was restricted to 8,000.

The Central China Area Army issued the instruction anew to the Shanghai Expeditionary Army as well as to the 10th Army, that they must restrict the number of units entering the Castle. From that we understood that the Central China Area Army wanted to avoid chaos in the Castle.

– How was the situation of Nanjing, other than Xiaguan?

I saw more than 10 bodies in Mo Chouhu (莫愁湖). In three places in Nanjing, I saw bodies.

– Were the bodies you saw in Mo Chouhu soldiers or civilians?

I am not sure now, whether they were soldiers or civilians. It might have been half-and-half. The bodies found in two places, Xiaguan and Mo Chouhu, were now considered as a “massacre”, I assume.

– It is said there were bodies at Yi Jiang Gate (揚江門) as well. Did you see them?

In some documents, there is mention of some bodies at Yi Jiang Gate, too. I passed the gate in the afternoon of the 14th, but there was nothing there that time.

In so saying, Mr. Tanida opened his album again. He showed me a photo of Yi Jiang Gate on the 14th. In the picture, we can see all of Yi Jiang Gate with its three arches, but there were no body-like shapes visible.

Some said they were killed at Yuhuatai (雨花台) too, but there were no bodies at all.

– In the book, *The History to be Judged*, written by Major General Tanaka Ryukichi, he said that Staff Officer Cho of the Shanghai Expeditionary Army confessed that he gave an order to massacre. You were close to Mr. Tanaka, what do you think of this?

Cho Isamu was one year junior to me--he was in the 28th class and graduated from the Army War College with excellent performance. He was a man of angular, patriotic, righteous indignation and never hesitated to pursue his belief. Together with Lieutenant Colonel Hashimoto Kingoro (橋本欣五郎), he was one of main members of Sakura-kai, the third biggest cross-sectional faction in the Showa era. At the October Incident, in 1931, the Sakura-kai's plot (an attempted coup d'etat) was uncovered before it happened and it is said that failure was partly because of Cho's reckless behavior. Nevertheless, Lieutenant Colonel Cho was surprisingly modest and polite when he associated with friends, and he was very kind to me, maybe because we had same name, Isamu.

Considering his personality, the above story might be not groundless. However, if he tried to issue a military order to a subordinate unit he must first obtain clearance from the Commander. It was not likely he had issued an official order without permission. Perhaps he gave it orally to military staff of a subordinate unit who came to get an order. I heard such a persistent rumor in the Central China Area Army. I knew they actually

killed prisoners by sword.

– What kind of person was Division Commander Lieutenant General Nakajima Kesago?

I heard many stories about the 16th Division. The 16th Division came from Kyoto, so, as I said before, they were weak, so it was not unlikely they might have caused trouble. Lieutenant General Nakajima was stationed in France for a while, being sophisticated, so I don't think he could have performed such a thing as the rumor suggested, but on the other hand, I could say he was not strong enough to control it. As a matter of fact, the bodies I saw in Xiaguan were the work of the 16th Division.

– At the end of January 1938, Colonel Hirota Yutaka (広田豊) together with Chief of the Second Section of the General Staff Headquarters, Honma Masaharu, visited Shanghai, Nanjing, Hangzhou. It is said that the purpose of their visit was to handle the matter of foreign countries' interests.

Hirota and I were in the same graduating class at the Army Academy. He was not so good at the Academy but it seems that he studied very hard at the Army War College, hard enough to get into the Army Saber Club.

After the inspection, Mr. Honma returned to Tokyo, while Hirota was assigned to the Headquarters of the Central China Expeditionary Army and opened an office in Shanghai, where he handled matters concerning foreign countries' interests. I also served as the Chief of Logistics in the Central China's General Headquarters, and frequently negotiated with resident foreigners. I think Hirota's duty was not so difficult then compared to issues arising in later years.

In November 1938, the Central China Expeditionary Army captured all of Wuhan. Without any sign of a Chinese Army's counterattack, the Japanese Army completed post-battle procedures and disbanded the Battle Command Base in Hankou, then returned to Nanjing to shift the troops to a defensive posture.

During this period, the Japanese government established the Central China Development Company in Shanghai as the top organization for financial development, as well as a

number of Japan-China National Policy Joint Ventures for the management of railway, ships, communication, national land development, electricity and water business, and so on.

The Headquarters of the Central China Expeditionary Army directed these local businesses and afterwards returned to Nanjing, the duty of Headquarters not only being military matters but also political and economical matters, which gave them new functions. The Third Section, in particular, which was in charge of logistics, had to direct the previously mentioned economical matters. Therefore we were terribly busy. Naturally, our staff and I, the Chief, had a lot of occasions to spend time with Japanese and Chinese businessmen and officials in which we received deep understandings of Central China's traditions.

During that time, I had many opportunities to talk with Chinese businessmen and officials on friendly terms, but even during drinks, I never heard about a Nanjing Massacre--not at all. Therefore, I have a strong belief that the truth is nothing like that as the current Chinese government insists, decades after the fact.

24) Interview with Captain Kaneko Rinsuke (金子倫助), Staff Officer of the 10th Army

In the middle of October 1937, Captain Kaneko Rinsuke, who worked in the Maintenance Bureau of the Ministry of the Army, was appointed staff officer in charge of logistics for the 10th Army, and participated in the Nanjing Attack. The 10th Army had 14 staff officers and Captain Kaneko was youngest, 32 years old at the time. The Third Section, which was in charge of logistics, had three members, Colonel Tanida Isamu, the Chief, Lieutenant Colonel Obata Nobuyoshi (小畑信良), and Captain Kaneko.

Next year, 1938, at the end of February, Captain Kaneko returned to his former position at the Maintenance Bureau of the Ministry of the Army. He joined the 10th Army as soon as the Army was organized and returned to Japan as soon as the 10th Army was disbanded.

After returned to Tokyo, Captain Kaneko worked at the Maintenance Bureau, then the Third Section of General Staff Headquarters, then in the early summer of 1941 he was appointed as resident officer in the US.

He was repatriated to Tokyo in the summer of 1942 by ship. After that, he served as staff

officer of the 8th Area Army, then senior staff officer of the 4th Air Force and at the end of the War, he served as munitions officer, the Ministry of Munitions – he was 40 years old then, a colonel.

In those days, he was the youngest and now he is 80 years old. He is fine but his wife has had health problem, so three years ago the couple moved to a private residential home that prepares meals and doctors on call. Mr. Kaneko now takes care of his wife and goes the company twice a week. I met him in December 1985 at the lobby of said senior home.

– When did you enter Nanjing?

I was terribly busy with matters concerning supply and guarding in rear areas so I had no impression when I entered Nanjing. Perhaps I was engaged in other jobs at that time because I was of the lowest rank. One thing I remember--before entering Nanjing Castle, it happened that I was in the Headquarters at Yuhuatai for some reason, I saw the flag of rising sun hoisted over the rampart and champagne was opened. I remember that moment at Headquarters at Yuhuatai clearly.

Also, I attended a meeting in the room of the Area Army Commander, where a sergeant of the 6th Division, who first raised the rising sun flag over the rampart, reported to the Commander, Lieutenant General Yanagawa Heisuke. The sergeant said that he threw a rope with hook and started to climb and during the climb someone shook his rope. The time that the sergeant hoisted the flag was 12 o'clock, December 12, so the meeting was probably on the 13th or 14th.

– When you entered Nanjing, what was the situation in there?

The date that I entered Nanjing was 13th or 14th. I saw no corpse in the Castle nor heard any shooting. I entered Nanjing but I had the task of moving to Hangzhou so I stayed just one night, or maybe two nights, and departed for Hangzhou. I had no clear memory about the inside of Nanjing. No memory means nothing happened; I think so.

– Did you see the entrance ceremony performed by General Matsui Iwane and Lieutenant General Yanagawa.

No memory of it at all. I believe I had already headed for Hangzhou .

– It is said there was massacre in Nanjing. Did you see something?

I remember well the bodies I saw between Hangzhou Bay and Nanjing. I saw the first bodies at the place of where the landing took place at Hangzhou Bay. Wearing new military uniforms, the bodies of Japanese soldiers lay in an orderly line. Their fresh, new uniforms were very impressive.

At the same place, I saw bodies of Chinese soldiers in a trench, too. And on the way to Nanjing, I saw a Chinese soldier's corpse run over by car, revealing the internal organs, a Chinese soldier's body sitting dead along the road, like Jizo or Kshitigrbha, and at a place around 10 km before Yuhuata, a swollen body. I remember these clearly. I saw no other bodies.

– The 10th Army was engaged in heavy fighting at Jinshan (金山) immediately after the landing, as well as at Yuhuata, outside Nanjing Castle.

I was always in the rear and moved through the logistics route. The bodies that I saw were all that I saw, as I said before. There were battles and there were bodies--maybe before I arrived there they were cleared already.

– So, you never heard of a Nanjing-Incident?

Never. After the War, I was totally surprised to hear about it at the Tokyo Trial (IMTFE). I am not hiding anything. I am not hesitating to say--I did not see anything in Nanjing, really. There was nothing impressive that happened.

– Did you go straight to Hangzhou after you left Nanjing?

Yes. There was no order to attack Hangzhou yet. Moving to Hangzhou was the first order, so I had to prepare the logistics line, and so on and went there. During the move to Hangzhou no significant battle occurred.

– In Hangzhou, you joined the Headquarters again?

Yes. The Headquarters was situated by a lake called Lake Xi (西湖) which had an island in the middle, and we met the New Year there. In Hangzhou, I had arranged for prostitutes--it was one of my jobs, concerning logistics. I found a contractor and negotiated with him on the highest price, that is, to my memory, 50 sen; to preserve the soldiers morale--that was the nominal purpose. I think it helped to reduce fighting between soldiers.

– In the beginning of February, the Chief of the Second Section of the General Staff Headquarters, Major General Honma Masaharu, visited Hangzhou for the matter of foreign countries' interests. Did you meet him?

I knew nothing about his visit.